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a bearing interposed between the housing and the input shaft and supporting the input shaft for rotation about the axis, the bearing having an inner race engaging the input shaft and an outer race;

the housing having at least one series of axially spaced, annular ribs that at least partially extend around the axis of the input shaft and around the outer race of the bearing, axially adjacent annular ribs being separated by an annular groove; and

a gasket made of resilient material interposed between the outer race of the bearing and the ribs, the gasket comprising a tubular member encircling the outer race of the bearing, the gasket having a cylindrical inner surface and an outer surface, the inner surface engaging the outer race of the bearing, and the outer surface engaging the ribs, the gasket having portions interdigitated with the ribs to resist relative axial movement between the gasket and the housing.

8. (Amended) The vehicle steering column of claim 7 further being defined by:

each rib of the series of ribs having side surfaces that extend from the bottom surface at an angle of approximately 57 degrees.

Please add claims 11-14, as follows:

11. The vehicle steering column of claim 1 wherein the ribs of the housing and the interdigitated portions of the gasket are abutting and are not adhesively adhered to each other, and the gasket is made of neoprene.

12. The vehicle steering column of claim 1 wherein the cylindrical inner surface of the gasket abuts the inner race of the bearing.

13. The vehicle steering column of claim 1 wherein the bearing is secured against axial movement relative to the input shaft.

14. The vehicle steering column of claim 1 wherein:
each rib in the series of ribs has a width and a height, the width being in the range of 0.068 inches to 0.078 inches, the height being in the range of 0.025 inches to 0.035 inches, each rib having a flat peak with an axial length in the range of 0.012 inches to 0.022 inches;

each annular groove having a flat valley with an axial length in the range of 0.012 inches to 0.022 inches; and

each rib of the series of ribs having side surfaces that extend from the bottom surface at an angle of approximately 57 degrees.